

BLUNDEL the Jesuit's Letter of

Intelligence, to his Friends the Jesuites at *Cambray*, taken about him when he was Apprehended at *Lambeth*, on *Monday* the 23th. of *June* 1679.

To *Madam Katharine Hall* in *Cambray*.

By *Dr. C. H. A. Maria*.

On the Thirteenth of *June* being *Fryday*, *Mr. Whistbread*, *Mr. Hareourt*, *Mr. Turner*, *Fennick* and *Gaven* of the Society, and *Mr. Coker* were brought to the *Barr* in the *Old Bayly*, *Mr. Coker* moved the Court for a longer time being only warned the night before, whereas the other Prisoners had eight days warning to prepare themselves, whereupon he was remanded to Prison till the next day then was the indictment read against the five above named Jesuits, for conspiring the Kings death, Subversion of Government and Protestant Religion, then *Mr. Gaven* swore that on the 24th. of *April* there was a confut held in *London*, where the death of the King was conspired, and that he carryed this Resolve from the one to the other, for their subscribing, and for particular circumstances against each: to corroborate this Testimony, other Witnesses *Bodlam*, *Frances*, *Dugdale* and *Chormiscane* came in with overtures to the Master of the Court, then did the Prisoners (after a most solemn and Religious protestation of their Innocence and ignorance of any conspiracy against his Majesty) desire that their witnesses might be heard, which could demonstrate that *Mr. Gaven* was actually at *St. Omers* all the whole time, but the Judge *Serjeant* ask each witness as he did appear, of what Religion he was, and upon answer that he was a *Roman Catholick*, the whole Court gave shout of laughter, then the Judge would say to them, well, what have you been taught to say, and by many scoffing questions (which moved the Court to frequent laughter) he did endeavour to take off the credulity of the witnesses, then the *Bishop*, *Taylor*, and *Gardiner* of *St. Omers*, offered to swear that they saw *Mr. Gaven* all the time at *St. Omers*, when he swore he was in *London*, after that the Prisoners at the Barr produced sixteen witnesses more that proved *Mr. Gaven* forsworn in *Mr. Islands* Tryal, because he was in *Shropshire*, when he swears he was in *London*, then did *Gaven* give of the Prisoners with a great deal of clearness and eloquence and with a cheerful countenance draw up their justification, shewing the force of their Evidence, and how fully their witness had proved *Mr. Gaven* perjured. Then he did lay open the improbability of such a Plot, and how unlikely *Mr. Gaven* should be intrusted in delivering Commillions to persons of Honour, and *Etharca*, whom he never (as he acknowledged) had seen before or since, this was delivered by *Mr. Gaven* with a countenance wholly unconcerned, and in a voice very audible, and largely and pertinently express; the Judge was incensed at this speech which he often interrupted him, but *Gaven* said my Lord, I plead now for my Life, and for that which is dearer to me than life, the honour of my Religion, therefore I beseech you have a little patience with me.

After this Plea of *Mr. Gaven* the Judge made his Arrayne to the Jury telling them that what the Prisoners had brought was only the bare assertions of boyes, who were taught it as a point of their Religion, to lye for the honour of their Religion, whereas *Mr. Gaven*, *Mr. Bodlam* and others were upon their Oathes, and if *Mr. Gaven* were to be taken no Courts could subvert. Then *Mr. Gaven* brought in four Witnesses which he had kept in reserve, an old Parson in his Canonical Gown, an old Dominican Monk, *Probator* & *pudor*: and two women that swore they saw *Mr. Gaven* in the beginning of *May* 1678, at this the whole Court gave a shout of laughter and hallow, that was almost a quarter the Cryers could not still them; never was Bear-baiting more rude and boisterous than this Tryal: Upon this the Judge desired the Jury, to consider and bring in their Verdicts, who after half an hours absence brought in the five Prisoners at the Barr all Guilty of High Treason; thereupon the whole Court clapt their hands and gave a great hallow, it being now eight at night, the Court adjourned till next day at seven a Clock which was *Saturday*, I was present from five in the morning till the Court broke up, the Prisoners composed themselves most Apostolically at the Barr, not the least passion or alteration appeared in them, at the invectives of the Judge, or the clamours of the people, but made a clear and candid defence, with a cheerful and unconcerned countenance, (as a slander by said) if they had been a Jury of Twelve they had been acquitted, I was with them both before and after their Tryal, and had the Honour to be in my Function serviceable to them, which I look upon as that God favoured me in, I hope for my future goods: Next day *Mr. Langhorn* a Lawyer, *Sir George Wakeman*, *Mr. Coker*, *Mr. Marsh*, *Mr. Ramby*, the three last Benedictioners, were brought to the Barr, where the Indictment being read against them for conspiring the King's Death &c. they pleaded all not guilty, then was *Langhorn* first tryed, whose Tryal held so long, that they had no time to Try the other four, and the Commission by which they sat, expiring that day, the Judge adjourned the Tryal of the other till the 1st. of *July*, and then the Judge commanded the Keeper to bring the five Jesuits, whom with *Langhorn* were Sentenced to be Hang'd, Drawn and Quartered, *Mr. Coker* and *Mr. Marsh* are close Prisoners, and have been so this eight months, with whom I have been, God has fitted and is still fitting them as sacrifices for himself, they are very well disposed and resigned to God's holy will, *Mr. Ramby* hath the Liberty of the Prison, with whom is *Mr. Eskes*, all cheerful and expect the good hour; On *Thursday* the day before the five Jesuits were Executed, my Lord *Shaftsbury* was with *Turner* and *Gaven*, promising the Kings Pardon if they would acknowledge the Conspiracy, *Mr. Gaven* answered he would not murder his Soul to save his Body, for he must acknowledge what he knew not, and what he did believe was not.

On *Friday* the 20th. of *June* *Mr. Whistbread* upon one Sledge with *Mr. Hareourt*, *Mr. Turner* and *Mr. Gaven* upon another Sledge, *Mr. Fennick* upon a Sledge by himself, were drawn from *Newgate* to *Tiburn*, *Mr. Langhorn* is for a time Reprieved and promised Pardon, if he will (as is Reported) discover the Estates of the Jesuites, he was their Lawyer is certain, my Lord *Shaftsbury* has been often with him.

In the way they comforted themselves seriously and cheerfully, *Mr. Gaven* had sing'd himself up as if he had been going to a Wedding, when they arrived at *Tiburn* they each made a Speech, first, all averring their ignorance of any Plot against His Majesty, secondly, pardoning their Accusers, thirdly, hartily praying for them.

But *Mr. Gaven* in his Speech made an Act of Contrition, which was much liked by all, for he was an excellent Preacher: then they all betook themselves to Meditation, for more than a good quarter, the multitude was great, yet there was a profound silence, and their most Religious comportment wonderfully allayed the fury of the People, when they had ended their Prayers, and the Ropes were about their necks there came an Horseman in full speed from *White Hall*, saying unto the Rode, a Pardon, a Pardon, so with difficulty he made through the Press to the Sheriff, who was under the Gallows to see Execution performed; then was the Pardon read, which expressed, that the King most graciously and out of his inclination to Clemency had granted them their lives, which by Treason they had forfeited; upon condition they would acknowledge the Conspiracy and lay open what they knew thereof. But they all thanked his Majesty for his inclination of mercy towards them, but as to any Conspiracy they knew of none much less are guilty of any, so they could not accept of any Pardon upon those conditions, after a little Recollection the Cart was driven away, that they were dead they were Quartered, but their Quarters were given to their friends, *Sanguis Martyrum fit semen Ecclesiae*.

I send you an account of *Mr. Puckering's* death, and will tell you what may happen, but I know not if they come to you, you may cover your Letter to me, for *Mr. Langhorn* at my Lady *Drummonds* in *Queen Street*, *London*.

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